

# **Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project**

## **Adaptive Management Oversight Committee**

### **Standard Operating Procedure**

**Title:** Trap Preparation and Use

**Number:** 14.0

**File:** MW SOP 14.Trap Preparation and Use.Final.20050430.doc

**Purpose:** This SOP provides guidelines for preparing and maintaining foot-hold traps for use in the field. It supersedes relevant sections of the 1998 Mexican Wolf Interagency Management Plan (USFWS 1998), and therefore represents, in part, the “Service Approved Management Plan” referenced in the Mexican Wolf Final Rule (50 CFR 17.84(k)).

**Exceptions:** None. Per SOP 2.0, AMOC must approve any exceptions to this SOP.

**Background:** Trapping is a necessary management action that enhances the Project’s monitoring capabilities, and removes problem animals or wolves that have localized outside the BRWRA. To increase trapping success and minimize occurrence of non-target captures, foot-hold traps must be maintained in proper working order. In addition, proper maintenance and care of traps will inevitably increase the life span and utility of the traps.

#### **Procedures:**

Capture of wolves shall be accomplished in a manner that minimizes risk of injury to the wolf and maximizes likelihood of successful capture in an expeditious manner.

#### **Trap Selection:**

1. The Project uses McBride #7 and #4 “EZ” Grip traps; both kinds have padded jaws.

#### **Trap Maintenance and Use:**

1. All traps must be labeled (e.g. Property of U.S. Government, Property of USDA, Property of Arizona, as appropriate), with an attached tag or stamp on the trap.
2. All traps and trapping devices will be set to minimize the chances of capturing nontarget species. Nontarget animals captured will be released alive, or disposed of in accordance with any applicable federal, state, or tribal permits. If a free-ranging dog is captured that has owner contact information, and cell phone service is available at the site, the owner will be called and informed about the situation. However, IFT members do not have sufficient equipment to restrain and hold onto such animals, nor can they transport them to the owner.
3. Capture devices used in restraining sets will incorporate any appropriate pan-tension devices, to prevent or reduce capture of nontarget animals, unless such use would preclude capture of the intended target animal(s).
4. Captured animals intended for release, relocation, or captivity will be handled and transported appropriately to achieve Project objectives.
5. Post appropriate warning signs on main entrances or commonly used access points to areas where foot-hold traps are in use. Routinely check signs to ensure they are present, obvious,

and readable. Signs must be removed when equipment is no longer in use.

6. Foot-hold traps may not be set closer than 30 feet to any exposed animal carcass, or part thereof, having meat or viscera attached that might attract nontarget animals. If an animal carcass could be dragged or moved by scavengers to within 30 feet of set foot-hold traps, the carcass should be secured to restrict movement.
7. Set traps such that captured animals will not be conspicuous to the public.
8. Use trap monitor devices in conjunction with traps as appropriate.
9. Physically check traps and trap-monitors at least one each 24 hours.
10. If weather might harm target animals in traps, cease trapping or check the traps and/or trap monitors every 2-3 hours (or more frequently as needed), until conditions improve or until they deteriorate to the point that traps and trap monitors must be removed.
11. Employees whose duties involve wolf capture must be appropriately trained on relevant issues and techniques by their respective agencies.

**Approvals:**

The Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Adaptive Management Oversight Committee approved this SOP on November 23, 2004.

**References:** None

**Appendixes:** None